



A reading comprehension and writing tool


Quick Start:
Gets Teachers & Students Going

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Introduction

WriteToLearn™ is a web-based service providing automatic assessment of both summaries and essays. The summary component evaluates the quality of a summary of a reading in any subject area including science, social studies, language arts and history. The essay component provides writers with immediate evaluation and tutorial feedback on responses to essay prompts. **WriteToLearn** also provides feedback on more mechanical aspects of writing including spelling, grammar, copying, repetition and inclusion of unimportant information. This detailed feedback guides students as they revise their work.

We have organized this *Quick Start* to cover **WriteToLearn** basics. Teachers will learn how to introduce **WriteToLearn** to their students, make changes to a class roster, assign activities, create their own prompts, and report on student progress.

Clicking the  symbol located throughout **WriteToLearn** provides teachers and students with quick, online access to basic interpretive and navigational assistance. Teachers can also access assistance by clicking the **Help** link when it appears in the teacher interface.

Let's Get Started!

Disclaimer: All data, including student, teacher, school names, location, grades and scores, and associated data are fictional and are modeled for sample purposes only; any form of familiarity is coincidental.

1. Getting Students Started in *WriteToLearn*

To use *WriteToLearn*, your students need to know how to log in to the student interface, select and submit a response to an activity, and get and understand feedback. These tasks are covered in the following sections.

Logging In

1. First, students open a web browser window and navigate to the *WriteToLearn* URL for students found in the *Getting Started with WriteToLearn* e-mail sent to your *WriteToLearn* school administrator.
2. The *Login* form is displayed. Students enter their **User ID** and **Password** and click the **Let's Go** button. The *Select an Activity* window is displayed.

Select an Activity

Welcome, Audrey A Amos! Click an activity to begin working.
 Learn about [Writing a Good Essay](#) or [Writing a Good Summary](#).
 Get help [Using WriteToLearn](#).

Class: Language Arts

| Essay Writing Activities | Tries Left | Teacher Comments | Status |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Community Serv | 4 | Viewed | Almost! |
| Historical Event | 6 | | Ready to Begin |

Class: World Stu

| Summary Writing Activities | Tries Left | Teacher Comments | Status |
|--|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Ancient Civilizations -- Aztec | 3 | New | |
| Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population | 6 | | Ready to Begin |

[Log Out](#)

To begin, the student selects an activity by clicking on its name. The *Write Your Essay* or *Write Your Summary* window opens.

The **Status** column indicates student performance on the most recent revision.

Select an Activity Window

Respond to an Activity

The example below shows the text input window for a **Summary Writing Activity**. The text input window for **Essay Writing** activities looks similar.

The screenshot shows a web-based form titled "Summary Writing Form". At the top, it says "Type or paste your summary into the box below." with a link "Writing a Good Summary" to the right. Below this, it displays "User: audrey" and "Reading: [Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population](#)". It also states "Expected summary length: 150 - 350 words." and "Tries left: 6" in a green box. A large text input area with a vertical scrollbar is in the center. At the bottom, there are five buttons: "Get Feedback", "Save Summary", "Check Spelling", "Format for Printing", "Select New Activity", and "Log Out".

Type or paste your summary into the box below. [Writing a Good Summary](#)

Tries left: **6**

User: audrey Reading: [Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population](#)

Expected summary length: 150 - 350 words.

Students type or copy and paste their response into the text box.

Get Feedback Save Summary Check Spelling Format for Printing

Then they click the **Get Feedback** button to receive feedback.

Select New Activity Log Out

Summary Writing Form

Scoreboard

Summaries

For **Summary Writing** activities, students use the *Scoreboard* feedback to target sections to reread before revising their summaries.

Score bars indicate performance by section. Students work to move them into the **Excellent** zone, keeping the length bar in the **Good** zone.

Students view **Teacher Comments** while revising their response.

Students click the **Editing Tools** links to receive revision suggestions.

User: **audrey** Reading: **Foundations of Geography** Tries left: **4**

| Section Coverage ? | Poor | Fair | Excellent |
|--|---|------|-----------|
| Population Distribution | <div style="width: 80%; background-color: blue;"></div> | | |
| Population Density | <div style="width: 60%; background-color: blue;"></div> | | |
| Birthrates and Death Rates | <div style="width: 40%; background-color: blue;"></div> | | |
| The Challenges of Population | <div style="width: 80%; background-color: blue;"></div> | | |

Length ?
178 words

Long
Good
Short

| Teacher Comments ? | Status | Overview |
|--------------------------------|--------|---|
| 10 minutes ago | New | Now use the Editing Tools to remove repeated and unimportant... |
| 22 minutes ago | Viewed | Your response is too short |

| Editing Tools ? | Status | Comment |
|-----------------------------|--------|------------------------------|
| Copying | Fair | Some copied parts |
| Spelling | Almost | A few misspelled words |
| Repeated | Fair | Some repeated content |
| Unimportant | Almost | Possibly unimportant content |

Summary Scoreboard Report

Students revise their response in the text box below the *Scoreboard* and then click the **Get Feedback** button to receive new feedback on their summary.

Revise your summary:[Writing a Good Summary](#)

User: **audrey** Reading: [Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population](#)
Expected summary length: 150 - 350 words.

Population is the amount of people in a specific area. At different times in history, populations have grown at different rates. The number of people being born and dying affect population. Regions where farming was a big part of the economy have larger populations. These regions don't have as many farmers any more though. Regions with good communities and climate tend to have more people. Population density is the amount of people for every square mile. Areas with higher population density tend to be easier to live in but these areas can be difficult to find jobs. In my city there are crowded places. Population density varies from country to country and from place to place. For example the United States is most likely going to have a higher density than a cold and baren country like Antartica. In parts of Asia and Africa, the population is growing faster than the food supply and there is not enough money to buy food. Demographers study population density and how the amount of people per square mile affect resources.

Get Feedback

Save Summary

Check Spelling

Format for Printing

View Your Summaries

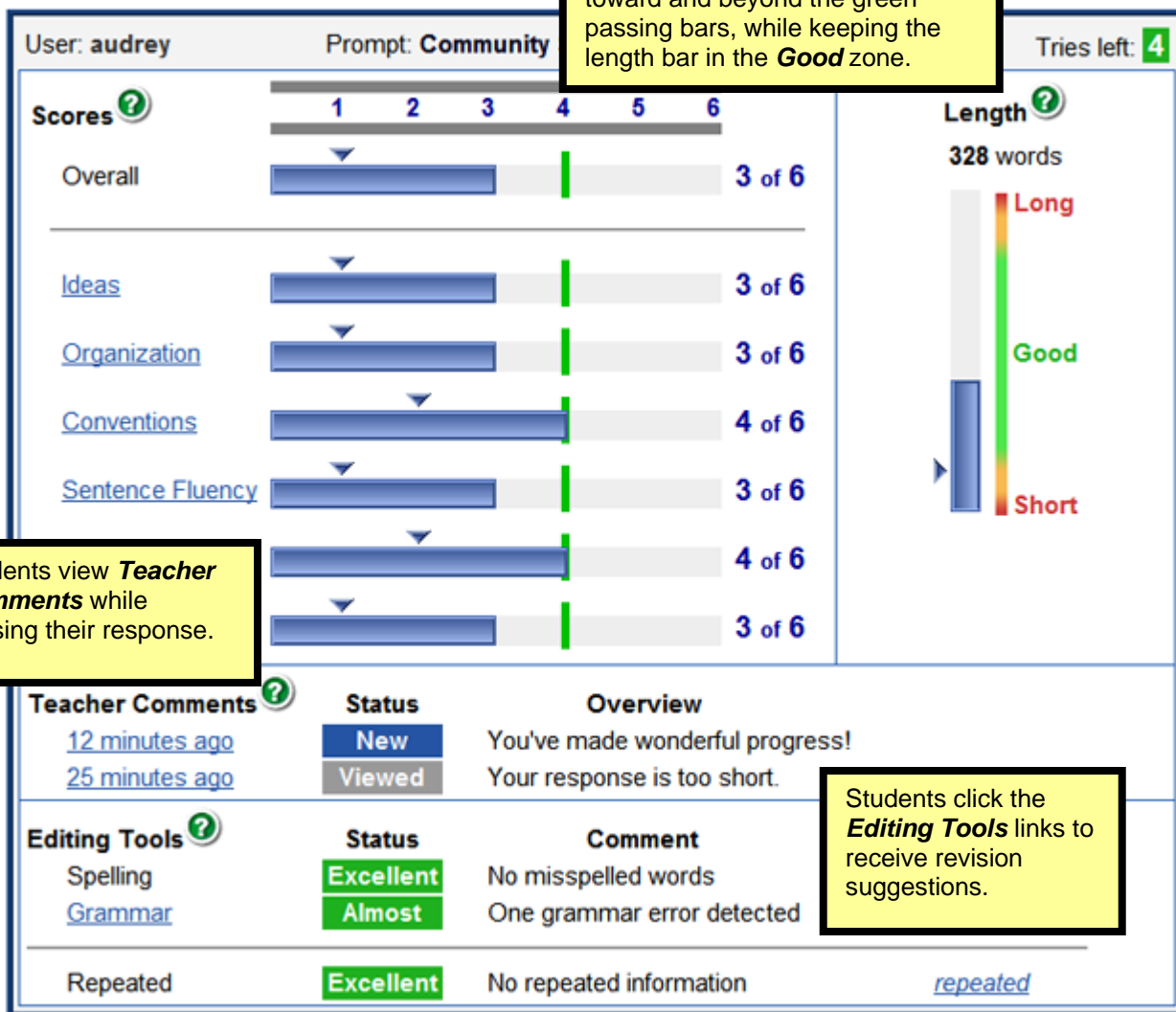
Select New Activity

Log Out

Summary Revision Form

Essays

For **Essay Writing** activities, students use the *Scoreboard* feedback to target specific aspects of their writing on which to focus as they revise.



Essay Scoreboard Report

Students revise their response in the text box below the *Scoreboard* and then click the **Get Feedback** button to receive new feedback on their essay.

Revise your essay:[Writing a Good Essay](#)

User: **audrey**Prompt: **Community Service**

Some people think that all 18 year-olds should perform one year of national or community service (for example, the Peace Corps, emergency medical services, Big Brother and Big Sister programs) before they pursue college or a paying job. What is your position on the issue? Write an essay in which you support your point of view with convincing reasons and examples.
(Expected essay length: 150 - 650 words.)

The more experience a person has to go into a specific field the better off they will be in their field. Therefore in performing national or community service I think it's a good idea for 18 year olds to have to complete this service before they pursue college or a paying job. In the issue of national or community service the 18 year old will be better able to perform their job or studies. Furthermore the service will make the 18 year old more rounded as an individual therefore allowing a better chance of success. To begin, national or community service teaches 18 year olds things that their school might not have gone over because in school they go over certain things that have to be completed in a certain time. These special services allow brief examples that might happen in the real world which prepare these 18 year olds for that job or college. In anything a person does the more experience they have the more they learn which allows the more things they can do. In a job or college this is the key to success. Next, doing such service will show that the 18 year old is serious about what he or she is trying to get into and that they will be committed to it because they are taking that extra step to be successful and learn more than what they already know. The more rounded an individual is said to be the more successful they are likely to be because they can adapt to survive any type of situation that comes at them. Without seeing what goes on before the 18 year olds pursue college or a paying job is like them walking blind-folded on a thin line and its likely they will fall. In conclusion, national or community service doesn't hinder the average 18 year old. In fact, it's an elevator or key to

GetFeedback

Save Essay

Check Spelling

Format for Printing

View Your Essays

Select New Activity

Log Out

Essay Revision Form

2. Getting Started with Teacher Tools

All the tools you need to view reports and complete administrative tasks are accessed through the *Teacher Tools Menu* available when you log in to the **WriteToLearn** teacher interface.

Logging In

1. Open a web browser window and navigate to the **WriteToLearn** URL for teachers found in the *Getting Started with WriteToLearn* e-mail sent to your **WriteToLearn** school administrator.
2. The *Teacher Login* form is displayed. Enter your **User ID** and **Password** and then click the **Let's Go** button. The *Teacher Tools Menu* is displayed as shown below.

Teacher: Nancy Jones
School: Power Middle School

| Reports | Tools |
|--|--|
| Class Scoreboard View average class performance | Classes Manage class rosters |
| Overview Examine class performance details | Assignments Assign activities to classes |
| Progress Monitor students' recent actions | Prompts Create or edit your own prompts |
| Students View a student's performance | Settings Adjust settings for assigned activities |
| Portfolio View and print writing portfolios, Provide comments on student work | |

Documentation

[Quick Start](#) [Reporting Tools](#)
[Student Guide](#) [Teacher Tools](#)
[Curriculum Guide for
Summary Writing](#)
* [Adobe Reader](#) required to view files

Log Out

The buttons on the left provide access to all the reports you need.

The buttons on the right link to all the tools you need for class administration.

Teacher Tools Menu

3. Using the Tools

Class Editor

Use the *Class Editor* to view a class and modify your class roster. To access this tool, click the **Classes** button on the *Teacher Tools Menu*.

Class: World Studies
Description: Jones 5th Period
[Create a new class](#)
[Edit class name/description](#)
[Help](#)

| Enrolled Students | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|------|--------|--------------------------|
| Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Login | Feedback |
| Storie | Rita | | rita | Student account created. |
| Amos | Audrey | A | audrey | |
| Bizzy | Luke | L | luke | |
| Furlong | Terry | | terry | |
| Lightoff | Tanya | | tanya | |
| Port | Eva | S | eport | |
| Spelling | Erin | | erin | |

Create Accounts
Enroll Students
Unenroll Students
Edit Accounts

Create Student Accounts
Submit

Student account(s) successfully created and enrolled in World Studies.

| Last Name | First Name | M.I. | Login | Password | Feedback |
|-----------|------------|------|-------|----------|----------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
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Class Editor Window

Create Accounts

Click this tab to create new student accounts.

Enroll Students

Click this tab to add students with existing accounts to your class.

Unenroll Students

Click this tab to remove students from your class.

Edit Accounts

Click this tab to edit student account information, including login and password.

Assign Class Activities

This tool is used to assign activities to classes. To access this tool, click the **Assignments** button on the *Teacher Tools Menu*.

96 activities match your selections. To assign an activity, click the appropriate checkbox in the "Assigned" column and click "Save Assignments".

Type: Essay ☒ Summary
Grade: Grades 3-5 ☒ Grades 6-8 ☐ Grades 9-12
Subject: History ☐ Language Arts ☐ Science ☒ Social Studies ☐ Help

Click after making selections.

| Assigned | Activity Name | Subject: Topic | Type | Grade Level | Length (in words) | Description |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---------|-------------|-------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Ancient Civilizations -- Aztec | Social Studies : History | Summary | 5-9 | 1246 | Lexile: 1080L Aztec territory, agriculture and trade, lifestyle and beliefs, artistic and scientific contributions, and spanish conquest |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population | Social Studies : Prentice Hall World Studies | Summary | 6-8 | 1187 | Lexile: 0880L Population distribution, density, and growth. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | Social Studies : World Studies | Summary | 6-8 | 1564 | Lexile: 1000L The variety of climate and vegetation in Africa and its influences on health. |
| ... | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Uncovering the Secrets of Ancient Egypt - Chapter 1 | Social Studies : Reading Street | Summary | 6 | 826 | Lexile: 1000L Chapter 1: Ancient Egypt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Uncovering the Secrets of Ancient Egypt - Chapter 2 | Social Studies : Reading Street | Summary | 6 | 680 | Lexile: 1000L Chapter 2: Learning About the Past |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Uncovering the Secrets of Ancient Egypt - 3, 4 and 5 | Social Studies : Reading Street | Summary | 6 | 1067 | Lexile: 1000L Chapter 3: Farming and Animals, Chapter 4: Dress and Appearance, Chapter 5: Archaeology in Action |

Select from the menus to narrow the list of activities to assign.

Assign an activity by clicking the box in the **Assigned** column.

Finish by clicking the **Save Assignments** button at either the top or bottom of the list.

Assign Class Activities Tool

Prompt Creation Tool

Use the *Prompt Creation Tool* to create and edit your own essay writing prompts. Prompts that you create will also be available to other teachers in your school to assign to their students. Student essays written to teacher-created prompts will be assessed for general writing quality only. They will not receive scores for traits of writing.

Provide your prompt information in the fields below and click "Create Prompt". [Prompt Writing Guidelines](#)

What the student will see

Prompt: Imagine you have traveled 50 years into the future, and all of the suggestions we think of now for energy conservation have been implemented. Think of the most exciting, most enjoyable, or weirdest things about how people live in this new energy conscious world. What types of devices and habits make it such a great place? Write a

Title: Energy Conservation Essay

Help with assessment

Topic Words: energy, conservation, future

Sample Essay: Well, since I am now 50 years into the future, I would like to share my impressions of this new energy conscious future. Like the most enjoyable things about how people live in this new world, or the types of devices and habits make it such a great place. The sun shines brighter, but is not harmful, no smog, and no pollution. I am first going to describe to you about most of the enjoyable things about how people live in this world. There are plants everywhere, even in the deserted areas. The other thing is that since there is absolutely no smog, the plants are bigger! Probably because

About the prompt

Grade Level: 6

Essay Type: Descriptive

Create Prompt

Provide the **Prompt** text and title.

Optionally, provide information to help with assessment.

Select basic information about your prompt.

Finish by clicking the **Create Prompt** button to save your prompt.

Prompt Creation Tool with Prompt Information

Once a prompt has been created, you or any other teacher in your school can find and assign the prompt using the *Assign Class Activities Tool*.

Settings Tool

Use the *Settings Tool* to customize the features and scoring feedback students receive from **WriteToLearn**. For example, you can adjust the way activities are scored to make them easier or more challenging. To access this tool, click the **Settings** button on the *Teacher Tools Menu*.

Overview

Title:

Foundations of Geography: 3.1 Population

Description:

Lexile: 0880L
Population distribution, density, and growth.

Type:

Summary

Subject:

Social Studies

Grade Level:

6-8

Topic:

Prentice Hall World Studies

Length (in words):

1187

Features

Maximum Attempts:

6 (default: 6)

Copying Threshold:

7 (default: 7 consecutive words)

Spell Check Type:

Give Suggestions

Text-to-speech:

☒ On
 ☐ Off
 Speaking Rate: Normal

Summary Writing Hints:

☒ On
 ☐ Off

Scoring

Preferred Length:

minimum: 150 (default: 150)
 maximum: 350 (default: 350)

Section Thresholds and Visibility:

| Visible to Student | Section | Passing Threshold Adjustment | | | Num Students Passing |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| | | easier | default | harder | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Population Distribution | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 0 of 0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Population Density | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 0 of 0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Death Rates | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 0 of 0 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | of Population Growth | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | 0 of 0 |

Adjust the number of revisions students can make, copying and spell check settings, text-to-speech, summary writing hints, and length requirements, as well as grammar check settings for **Essay Writing**

Adjust passing thresholds to make it easier or harder for students to pass reading sections or score categories.

Save Changes

Settings Tool for a Summary Writing Activity

For **Summary Writing** activities, the *Settings Tool* allows you to make the following adjustments:

- Increase or decrease the number of attempts your students have to revise their summaries for scoring feedback.
- Increase or decrease the number of consecutive words occurring in both the student's summary and the reading that **WriteToLearn** will consider copying from the text.
- Change the feedback returned by the spelling tool.
- Turn on or off the text-to-speech, dictionary and translation tools available from the readings.
- Adjust the speaking rate of the text-to-speech tool.
- Turn on or off the summary writing hints available to students with their score feedback.
- Adjust expected summary length, requiring a longer or shorter response.
- Adjust passing thresholds to make sections easier or harder for students to pass.
- Choose the sections of the reading on which you would like students to receive feedback.

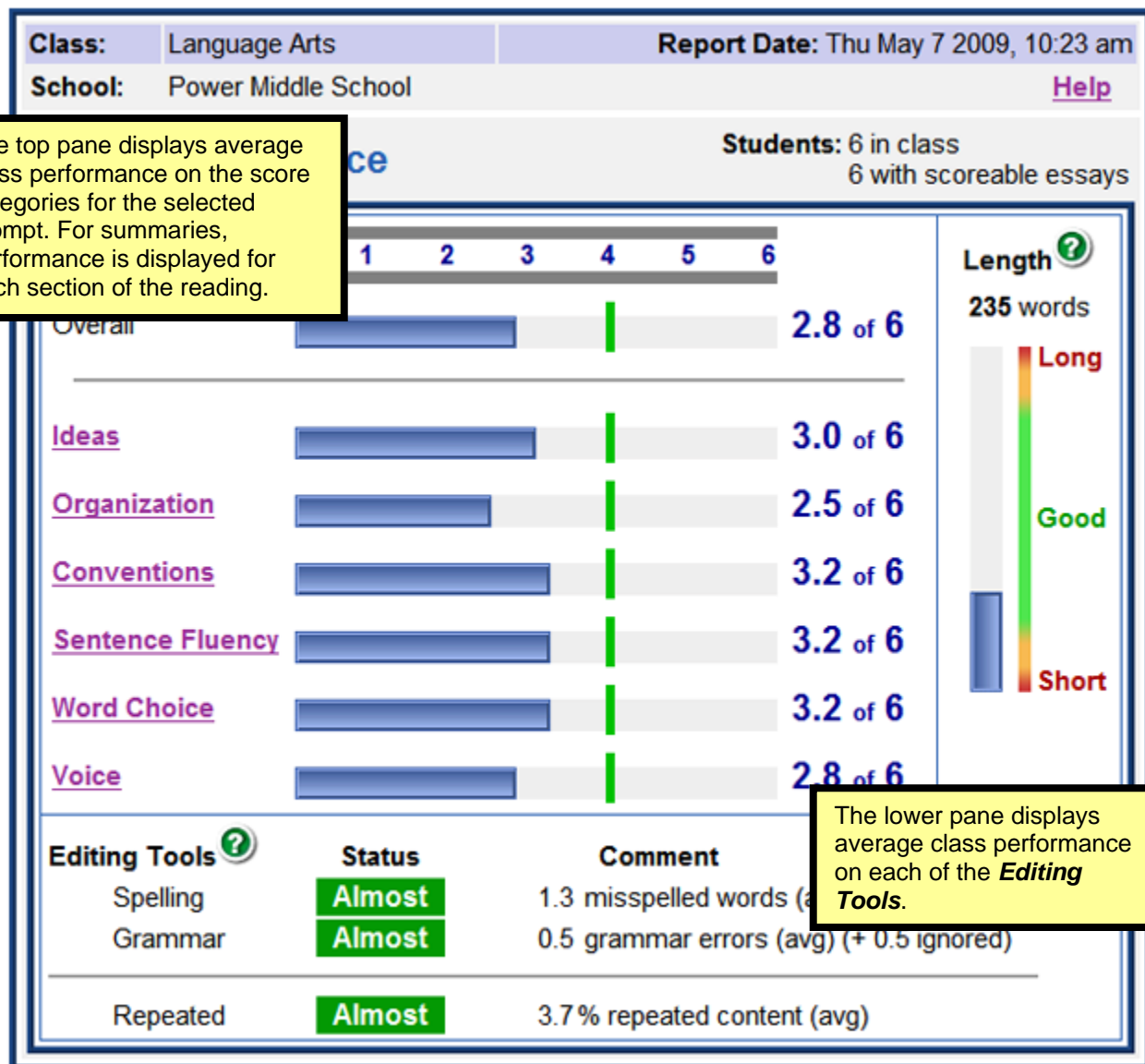
For **Essay Writing** activities, the *Settings Tool* allows you to make the following adjustments:

- Increase or decrease the number of attempts your students have to revise their responses for scoring feedback.
- Change the feedback returned by the spelling and grammar tools.
- Adjust expected essay length, requiring a longer or shorter response.
- Adjust passing thresholds to make score categories easier or harder for students to pass.
- Choose the score categories on which you would like students to receive feedback.
- Customize the scale on which the overall essay feedback is provided to your students.

4. Using Teacher Tools - Reports

Class Scoreboard Report

The *Class Scoreboard Report* displays the average class performance for a selected activity using the same display as the student interface. Use this performance summary of your class to identify overall strengths and weaknesses. To access this report, click the **Class Scoreboard** button on the *Teacher Tools Menu*.



Class Scoreboard Report

Overview Report

The *Overview Report* provides detailed information on individual student and class performance. Use this report to get detail on student performance and identify individual strengths and weaknesses. To access this report, click the **Overview** button on the *Teacher Tools Menu*.

Individual student performance on each score category is color coded for easy analysis. For summaries, performance is displayed for each section of the reading.

| Report Date: Thu May 7 2009, 10:45 am | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|---------|----------|--------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|-----|
| Preferred Length: 150 - 650 words | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Help | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| in Last Essay (Max. Possible) | | | | | | | | Co | | | | | | |
| | Con- | Con- | Sentence | Word | Voice | Word | Spelling | Repeated | Grammar | Minutes | Attempts | Passing | | |
| | ventions | ventions | Fluency | Choice | (6) | Count | Errors | % | Errors | on Task | | Attempts | Attempts | |
| | (6) | (6) | (6) | (6) | (6) | | | | | | | | | |
| Ames, Audrey (audrey) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 328 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 29 | 2 | 0 | | |
| Bizzy, Luke L. (luke) | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 82 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 18 | 1 | 0 | | |
| Furlong, Terry (terry) | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 135 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 22 | 1 | 0 | | |
| Lighthoff, Tanya (tanya) | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 179 | 1 | 11 | 0 | 28 | 2 | 0 | | |
| Port, Eva S. (evaport) | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 211 | 2 | 11 | 0 | 21 | 1 | 0 | | |
| Spelling, Erin (erin) | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 479 | | | | | | | | |
| Averages | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Students | Overall | Ideas | Organi- | Conven- | Sentence | Word | Voice | Word | S | | | | | |
| | (6) | (6) | zation | tions | Fluency | Choice | (6) | Count | | | | | | |
| | | | (6) | (6) | (6) | (6) | (6) | | | | | | | |
| Students: 6 | 2.8 | 3 | 2.5 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 2.8 | 236 | 1.3 | 3.7 | 0.5 | 24.8 | 1.5 | 0.2 |
| With attempts: 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Editing tool results are also provided.

Class averages for each score category or reading section and tool are displayed at the bottom.

* Time, in minutes, between feedback requests. Requests with intervals greater than one hour not included.

Class Overview Report

Other Reports

Progress

The *Progress Report* displays a graph and description of the current progress of each student in a selected class. Use this report to monitor current and recent class activity.

Students

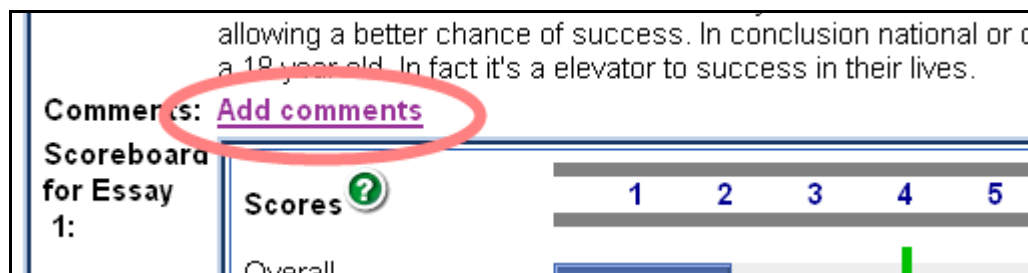
The *Students Report* displays performance for one student at a time. Use this report to examine a single student's performance across all activities.

Portfolio

The *Portfolio Report* displays the writing portfolio for an individual student or the entire class. Use this report to view and print all responses and scoreboards for a student, class or activity. The *Portfolio Report* also provides a method for teachers to comment on individual student responses.

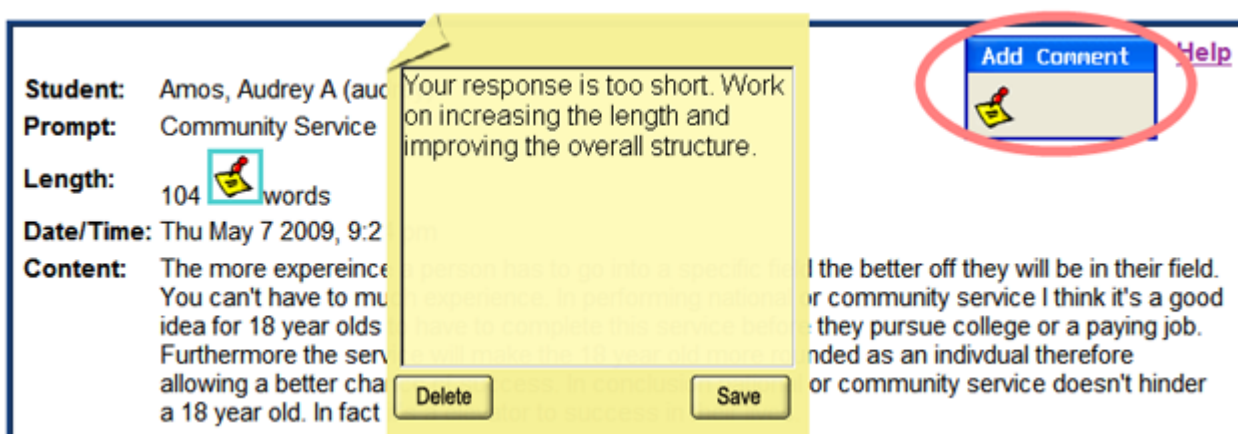
5. Teacher Comments

Teachers can comment on individual student responses using the *Portfolio Report*. Students can then view these comments while revising their writing. To access this tool, click on the **Add comments** link between the student's response and the scoreboard in the *Portfolio Report*.



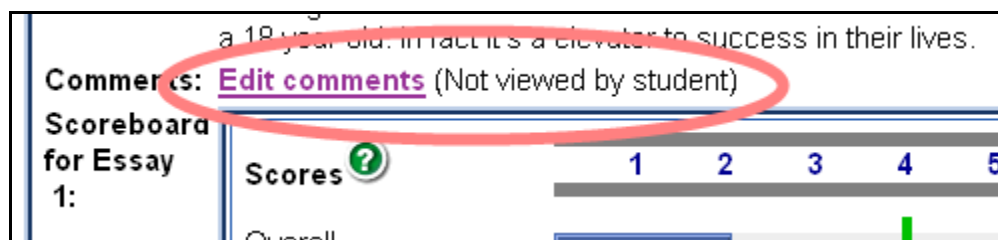
Portfolio Report - Add comments link

Once you click on the link, the **Add Comment** toolbar will appear. Click the note icon in the **Add Comment** toolbar, position your cursor where you want to add a note, and click your mouse. Type your comment in the yellow box that appears and click **Save**. Clicking **Delete** will remove the note.



Comment on Student Response

Once you have created one or more comments, the **Comments** link on the *Portfolio Report* will change to **Edit comments**. Once a student reviews the comments, the date and time the student viewed them will be displayed.

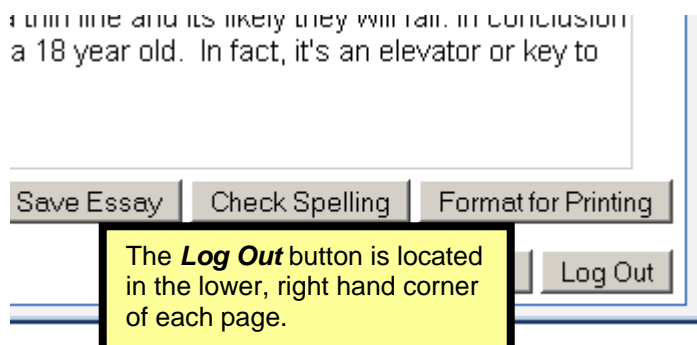


Portfolio Report - Student has not viewed Comments

6. Leaving *WriteToLearn*

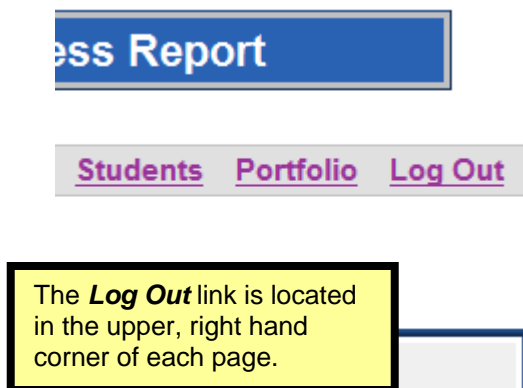
You and your students should exit *WriteToLearn* by using the **Log Out** button rather than by closing your Internet web browser. Using browser controls rather than *WriteToLearn* controls can result in unpredictable behavior.

Students



Log Out Button on Student Response Revision Window

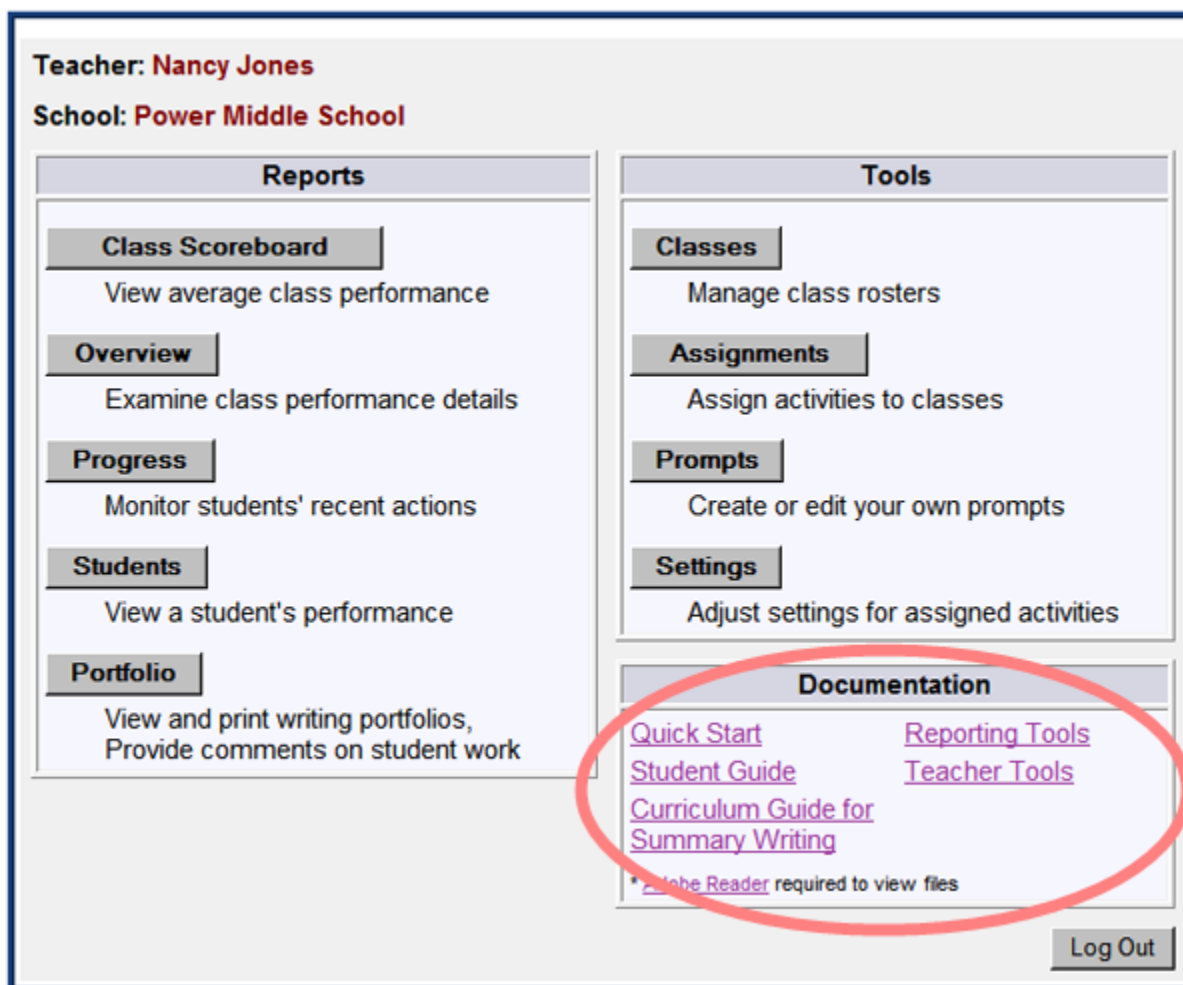
Teachers



Log Out Link on Teacher Menu Bar

7. Further Assistance

For more detailed documentation on the student interface, class management or report generation, please consult the *Student Task Guide*, *Teacher Tools Task Guide* or the *Reporting Tools Task Guide*. For suggestions of how to incorporate **WriteToLearn** in your classes, see the *Curriculum Guide for Summary Writing*. The guides can all be accessed from the *Teacher Tools Menu*.



In the event of technical difficulties, please contact our customer support line at 1-800-927-7470 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM Eastern Time, Monday – Friday, or e-mail EATechSupport@pearson.com.

Appendix A - System Requirements

The minimum system requirements for using **WriteToLearn** are:

Windows

- Windows 2000, XP
- 128 MB RAM (minimum), 512 MB RAM (recommended)
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher, Firefox 2.0 or higher
- JavaScript enabled
- Flash plug-in 8.0 or higher

Macintosh

- MAC OS 9.2 (minimum), Latest version of OS X (recommended)
- 128 MB RAM (minimum), 512 MB RAM (recommended)
- Safari 1.3.2 or higher, Firefox 2.0 or higher, Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.1 or higher
- JavaScript enabled
- Flash plug-in 8.0 or higher
- Full functionality of the following features is available only in Safari 1.3.2 or higher and Firefox 2.0 or higher:
 - Text-to-speech (cookies are required in Safari 4)
 - Roster management
 - The ability to ignore spelling and grammar errors
- The Teacher Comments feature is available only in Safari 1.3.2, Safari 3.0 or higher and Firefox 2.0 or higher

Monitor Resolution

800 x 600 (minimum), 1024 x 768 (recommended)

Bandwidth

512 Kb/sec (minimum) if using the text-to-speech feature and 256 Kb/sec (minimum) otherwise